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Narrative and Material: Paintings on Rare Metal, Stone and Fabric in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries

Kayo Hirakawa

1. Introduction

From the late sixteenth century to the early seventeenth century in Europe, various materials came to be used as the painting-supports. Copper, tin, slate, marble, lapis lazuli, silk and others added a rare and curious appearance to artworks. In some cases, their surface was left partly unpainted and was converted to be part of the pictorial representation. Art lovers at that time highly valued the paintings on rare materials especially for their unique appearance, and ardently collected them in their collection rooms, *studiolo*, *cabinet* or *Kunstkammer*. These were full of precious items, such as ancient coins and cameos, holy relics, goldsmith works, jewels, minerals, zoological and botanical specimens, and so on.

This article examines how these paintings on rare materials narrate stories in their own way. The questions are as follows:

1. Is there any preference in the choice of the theme?
2. Did painters take account of the unique quality of such supports, when they created history paintings on them?
3. Did the materials give any meaning to the narrative image painted on them?

2. The Oil Painting on Copperplate

First, the oil painting on copperplate will be examined. Copperplate oil paintings were the most widespread among the paintings on special supports in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹ For example, Bartholomäus Spranger, the court painter for the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II of Hapsburg, was famous as an expert of the copperplate oil painting from his youth.² In *The Flagellation of Christ* (fig. 1), painted during his stay in Rome in the early 1570s, the

monumental body of Christ with anatomical details can be seen, and the brilliant colors of pink, blue, yellow and green fascinate our eyes. A series of mythological paintings *Hercules and Omphale* (fig. 2) and *Vulcan and Maia* (fig. 3) painted for Rudolf II show an intimate lovers' atmosphere with detailed depictions of small objects such as Maia's cornucopia of fruits, Vulcan's hammer and blacksmith works, Hercules' club held by Omphale, and a spool and thread in Hercules' hands. *The Calvary* (fig. 4) by Jan Brueghel the Elder, another virtuoso of the copperplate painting, shows more than one hundred figures and a detailed landscape in gleaming colors. These examples show us that the smooth and shiny surface of the copperplate enables painters to bring out the brilliance

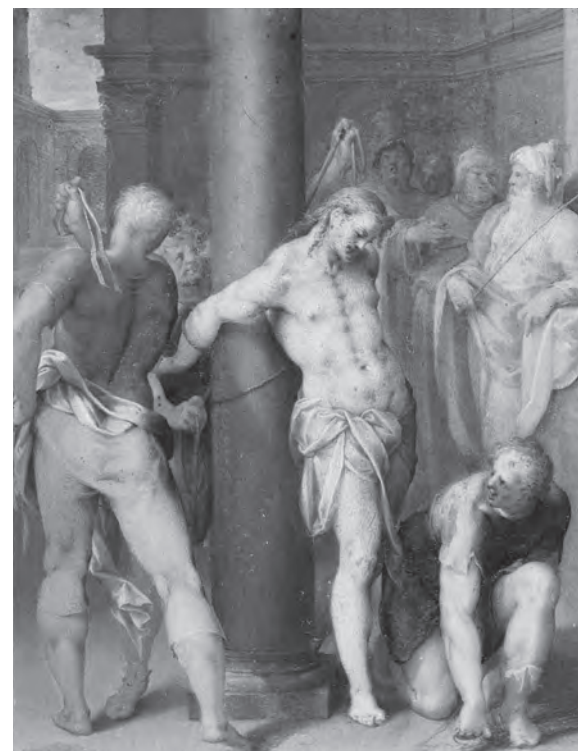


Fig. 1 Bartholomäus Spranger, *The Flagellation of Christ*, 1572–1575, oil on copper, 22.5 x 17 cm, Adam Williams Fine Art Ltd., New York.



Fig. 2 Bartholomäus Spranger, *Hercules and Omphale*, mid 1580s, oil on copper, 24 x 19 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



Fig. 3 Bartholomäus Spranger, *Vulcan and Maia*, mid 1580s, oil on copper, 23 x 18 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



Fig. 4 Jan Brueghel the Elder, *Calvary*, 1594, oil on copper, 36.2 x 55.4 cm, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

of oil colors at a maximum and depict motifs with minute detail.

Examining copperplate oil paintings made in this period, we find that there is no particular preference of choosing narrative themes to be painted on them. Biblical and mythological scenes were equally represented. Painters knew that the smooth surface of

copper is suitable for detailed depictions, and utilized it to demonstrate the delicate brushwork. As the above-mentioned artworks show, this special support certainly contributed to the realistic depictions and abundance of motifs in history paintings. Since Alberti's *On Painting* published in 1430s,³ the bountiful variety of motifs has been regarded as one of the most

important criteria in an excellent history painting. On the other hand, painters covered the whole surface of copperplate with pigments, just as they did in the case of typical paintings on wood or canvas. As a result, this special support did not develop enough its own way to narrate the story.

Did the copperplate give any meaning to the narrative image painted on it? In the cases of the allegory for glorifying princes, the copperplate sometimes seems to give the artwork a symbolical meaning of *immortality* just like memorial medals and plaquettes, because of its durability. Bronzino's *Allegory of Happiness* (fig. 5), the earliest example of copperplate oil paintings still remaining, was painted at the wedding of Francesco de' Medici and Johanna of Hapsburg in 1565. Comparing this painting with the letters and notes written by Vincenzo Borghini, who invented the program of the ceremony ornaments, and the contemporary descriptions such as Domenico Mellini's booklet published in 1566, we can notice that Bronzino reused some allegorical figures in the *apparato*, namely, temporary ornaments for streets and

buildings installed for the entrance of Johanna and her entourage into the city.⁴ The *apparato*, however huge and splendid they were, were destroyed after the ceremony. In contrast, Bronzino's image on the copper, though it is a tiny one, will eternally exist and demonstrate what kind of virtues the prince has, as well as celebrate his wedding and the prosperity of his realm forever. The metal support ensures this immortality, symbolically as well as materially.⁵

3. The Watercolor Painting on Silk

Silk, considered to be one of the most luxurious fabrics all over the world, was occasionally used as the support for watercolor or tempera paintings. *The Holy Shroud* (fig. 6) attributed to Giulio Clovio is a rare existent example of silk painting from the sixteenth century. The Holy Shroud, now in the Cathedral of Turin, is a white linen cloth with traces of a man, and is believed to have wrapped the dead body of Christ. In the center of the watercolor painting, three angels hold this mysterious cloth. The painter depicted it accurately and even repeated the stains around the



Fig. 5 Bronzino, *The Allegory of Happiness*, c. 1565–1567, oil on copper, 40 x 30 cm, Uffizi Gallery, Florence.



Fig. 6 Attributed to Giulio Clovio, *The Holy Shroud*, late 1570s, watercolor on silk with a linen support, 55.6 x 44.5 cm, Sabauda Gallery, Turin.

traces of the man. Below this depiction, Joseph of Arimathea, John the Evangelist and Nicodemus are wrapping the body of Christ with a strip of white cloth, and the three Marys are mourning His tragic death. Twelve scenes from the Passion of Christ frame the image.

The Italian inscription at the top reads “*IL VERISSIMO RITRATTO DEL SANTISSIMO SVDARIO DEL NOSTRO SALVATORE GIESV CHRISTO*” (The genuine similitude of the Holy Shroud of our Savior Jesus Christ), while the Latin at the bottom is a sentence of prayer for the glory of His Resurrection⁶. In order to represent “the genuine similitude” of the sacred cloth, the painter used the fine-textured glossy silk as the surface of the Holy Shroud with only thin layers of pigment on it. The narrative sequence begins from the Last Supper in the upper left and continues through the Flagellation in the lower left, the Mocking of Christ in the upper right, the Crucifixion in the middle right, Wrapping the Dead Body instead of the Deposition in the center, to the Resurrection in the lower right. This flow of narratives illustrates the context in which the Holy Shroud emerged.

In this case, silk was intentionally chosen as a special support to depict a particular subject matter. In Christianity, some legendary images were believed to be made not by man, but divinely created. The Holy Shroud, Sudarium of St. Veronica, and Mandylion of Edessa – these were believed to have emerged on the fine fabric. The viewer at that time presumably associated the silk support with this religious tradition. Through this association, the silk support added a more realistic feel to the object and its story depicted on the painting.

The most famous example of painting on fine fabric may be a self-portrait of Dürer. Dürer presented this self-portrait, together with his prints, to Raphael as a token of their friendship, and Giulio Romano inherited it at Raphael’s death. Though the painting is now lost, Vasari witnessed this “miracle” (“*miracolo*”) work in Giulio’s house in Mantua and described it in his *Vite*. According to Vasari’s descriptions, this self-

portrait was executed on fine linen (“*una tela di rensa sottile*”) by using watercolor without grounding and highlight with white lead (“*biacca*”). When it was held against the light, the light penetrated the semi-transparent cloth and worked as a highlight instead of the pigment of white lead. It is evident that Dürer was inspired by the Sudarium of St. Veronica, which was sometimes represented as a transparent cloth with Christ’s face in Northern Europe (fig. 7). Dürer’s self-portrait indicates that fine fabric, which was not usually used as a painting-support due to its fragility, added to artworks some sense of awe through association with the miraculous images from Christianity.⁷



Fig. 7 Robert Campin, *St. Veronica*, detail, c. 1430, oil on wood, Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main.

4. The Oil Painting on Stone-Plate

In contrast to the painting on silk, many examples of the oil painting on stone still exist, and some preferences of the subject matter can be deduced from them.⁸ The first to create this type of special painting was Sebastiano del Piombo, a Venetian painter active in Rome who had a close relationship with Michelangelo.⁹ Looking at his works, we know that he preferred the slate stone as a painting support and the

devotional images like Pietà, Madonna and the Sleeping Child and Christ Bearing the Cross are dominant in his oeuvre. As scholars like Michael Hirst and Hana Seifertová have already pointed out, the gray-black color of the slate stone brings out the blue grayish palette of Sebastiano del Piombo more



Fig. 8 Sebastiano del Piombo, *Ubeda Pietà*, c. 1539, oil on slate, 124 x 111.1 x 35 cm, Casa Ducal de Medinaceli Foundation, Seville.

effectively (fig. 8). The dark and pale tone creates a gloomy, melancholic atmosphere. In addition, the matt texture of the slate reduces the reflection of light on the picture's surface, which makes it easier for the beholder to concentrate on their devotion.¹⁰

The character of Sebastiano's works had a great influence on later generations, up until the seventeenth century. For example, Alessandro Turchi, born and active in Verona, moved to Rome around 1614,¹¹ often used the slate, black marble and touchstone to depict the tragic, nocturnal, biblical and mythological scenes. He sometimes left the support unpainted and successfully represented the perfect darkness where the tragic scene dramatically unfolds (fig. 9).

Some painters like Turchi obeyed Sebastiano's scheme, while others broke new ground at the end of the sixteenth century. They paid attention to more precious stones like lapis lazuli, marble, alabaster and so on to give their artworks a new appearance and value as an objet d'art. The surface of the stones was now left unpainted. The task for painters was how to utilize the unique vein and grain of stones in their pictorial enterprise to create a new, innovative image that the usual paintings could never realize. The



Fig. 9 Alessandro Turchi, *The Lamentation*, mid 1610s, oil on slate, 42 x 53 cm, Galleria Borghese, Rome.

creativity of the artist was challenged by the nature of the support. In this challenge, painters might recall Leonardo's famous advice for exciting the inventive genius. In the *Treatise on Painting*, Leonardo encouraged painters to look at smeared walls or veined stones and fancy in vision in their confusing lines and forms various motifs and compositions like landscapes, battle scenes, figures and faces etc. Through this exercise, painters can cultivate their ability to create new inventions.¹²

Cavaliere d'Arpino chose the mythological theme of Perseus and Andromeda for the lapis lazuli with a vivid blue surface and white veins (fig. 10). Perseus and Andromeda is one of the most successful compositions from D'Arpino's smaller paintings. In addition to the lapis lazuli version, at least eight works by the painter remain, which were continuously made around 1600 in three versions with slight difference in the arrangement of the main motifs.¹³ This popularity might be one of reasons why the painter dared to select the expensive support, lapis lazuli. Comparing it with

another version painted on a slate panel (fig. 11), we notice that the vivid blue surface with white veins is converted to the blue sea and sky with unusual tension created by the emergence of the Sea Monster. The painter ingeniously represents a supernatural phenomenon with help from the texture of the precious stone that nature has created.

The stone surface is also used to depict the religious vision of saints and the emergence of holy beings as seen in the *Madonna and Child with Adorning St. Francis*, painted by Agostino Carracci on alabaster (fig. 12). With a few exceptions, like Tempesta's forest landscape with a hunting scene on dendrite (fig. 13), the unique surfaces of precious stones were generally used to represent the emergence of the supernatural beings from biblical and mythological realms.



Fig. 10 Cavalier d'Arpino, *Perseus and Andromeda*, c. 1600, oil on lapis lazuli, 22.5 x 15.5 cm, Art Museum, St. Louis.



Fig. 11 Cavalier d'Arpino, *Perseus and Andromeda*, 1602, oil on slate, 52 x 38.2 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



Fig. 12 Agostino Carracci, *Madonna and Child with the Adoring St. Francis*, early 17th century, oil on alabaster, 22 x 18 cm, Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples.

5. Hans von Aachen's *Four Elements*: A Climax of the Stone-Plate Oil Painting

Hans von Aachen, another court painter for Rudolf II of Hapsburg, followed this trend and created his masterpiece, *The Four Elements* (figs. 14–17). Using both sides of two alabaster plates, the painter represented the four elements – air, water, fire and earth which the world was thought to consist of – through mythological scenes.¹⁴

For the wind, Hans von Aachen selected the opening scene from Virgil's *Aeneid* (I, 34–123) where Aeolus, the king of Aeolia, releases the Winds and Storms from the cave to attack the Trojan ships at the request of Juno (fig. 14). In the left foreground, the painter has depicted Juno asking Aeolus, the king of Winds who is orchestrating the attack. The Winds are flying around the sky and blowing strong wind. Among them the figure of the Thunderbolt, represented in the form of putto with brilliant horns on its head, can also be recognized. The orange-colored veins in this part are converted to represent the cloudy sky lit up by the lightning. In the middle of the raging



Fig. 13 Antonio Tempesta, *Baer Hunt* and *Boar Hunt*, late 16th century, oil on dendrit, 40.7 x 31.2 cm; 42.2 x 32 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

sea, the Trojan ships are engulfed by waves. On the ship close to the foreground, the armored man, Aeneas spreads his arms and prays to the sky (Aeneid, I, 93–103), while his mother Venus appears in the sky on her chariot drawn by white doves. Though Virgil's text does not mention the emergence of the goddess in this scene, the painter inserted this motif, presumably to indicate that Aeneas' fortunes will improve through mercies of Venus. In the following episode, Dido, the queen of Carthage, will fall in love with Aeneas through the schemes of Venus (Aeneid, I, 657–749). Dido will welcome Aeneas and his compatriots and afford all convenience to them.

One of the main visual sources for Hans von

Aachen's work would be the famous print, *Quos Ego*, engraved by Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael's invention (Fig. 18). Hans von Aachen referenced the stormy seascape from the background of *Quos Ego* scene in the print, and arranged the main narrative motifs, that were regularly divided in the print – Trojan wrecked ships, Juno and Aeolus, Venus on her chariot – in a spiral form that was suitable for a one scene narrative. The opal-white surface with blue-gray veins of the alabaster panel is turned into the sky and sea. The boundary between these is now made unclear by the storm cloud and high waves. The hazy coast in the distance is indicated solely by the thinly spread, oily green pigment.



Fig. 14 Hans von Aachen, *Aeolus Releasing the Winds*, c. 1603, oil on alabaster, 38 x 45 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



Fig. 15 Hans von Aachen, *The Triumph of Ceres, Bacchus, Venus and Cupid*, c. 1607, oil on alabaster, 37 x 45 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



Fig. 16 Hans von Aachen, *The Fall of Phaethon*, c. 1607, oil on alabaster, 37 x 45 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Fig. 17 Hans von Aachen, *Perseus and Andromeda*, c. 1607, oil on alabaster, 38 x 45 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Turning the plate, the viewer can see Andromeda bound to the rock, Perseus riding on Pegasus, and the ferocious Sea Monster which symbolizes the threat of the water (fig. 17). Following the above-mentioned precedent works by D'Arpino and Agostino Carracci, Hans von Aachen shows the ominously frothing sea

using the surface of the alabaster.¹⁵ Perseus was put in the middle of an orange-colored vein, which glorifies the hero like a halo.

The counterpart to this dual-sided painting is *The Fall of Phaethon* representing the fire on the one side and *The Triumph of Ceres, Bacchus, Venus and Cupid* symbolizing the earth on the other side (figs. 15–16). In *The Fall of Phaethon*, Hans von Aachen borrowed the main figures from Michelangelo's drawing, well known through the reproduction print by Nicolas Beatrixet,¹⁶ and concentrated all his effort on how to utilize the more complicated brown-orange colored veins to depict the story. In the dark brown vein in the upper right, Phaethon meets his father Apollo, and asks to borrow the chariot of the sun as proof that he is the genuine son of the god. This scene precedes the fall of Phaethon in the middle field. Here, the veins of stone are used to divide the scenes belonging to different sequences of the story. A preparatory study for *The Fall of Phaethon* (fig. 19) shows us how carefully the painter examined the grains and veins of the stone to determine his composition.¹⁷ In the painting, he moved the putto, with a jar on his back, to the right, and expanded the unpainted area of the opal-



Fig. 18 Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael, *Quos Ego*, c. 1516, engraving, 41.8 x 32.3 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 19 Hans von Aachen, *The Fall of Phaeton*, c. 1607, graphite, red chalk and pen and brown ink, brown wash, 33.3 x 42.4 cm, Kunstmuseum, Kupferstichkabinett, Basel.

white surface to the bottom. As a result, he succeeded in depicting more impressively that Phaethon and the chariot of the sun, struck by Jupiter's thunderbolt, are falling head first from the sky to the ground.

In the last image, namely, *The Triumph of Ceres, Bacchus, Venus and Cupid* (fig. 15), the painter appears to create an original image based on the famous Latin proverb derived from Lucian's comedy *Eunuch* (IV, 5), "*Sine Cerere et Baccho Friget Venus*"; that is, "Without Ceres and Bacchus, Venus freezes". Contrary to the proverb, Ceres and Bacchus stand by Venus in the painting, and the goddess of love's power increases, as the burning heart in her hand indicates. Ceres with a cornucopia full of fruits, Bacchus on the goat with a glass of wine and a jar in his hands, and Venus with an arrow and the burning heart are cheerfully marching together. They are preceded by Cupid on his chariot drawn by swans. To celebrate this triumphal march, putti are scattering flowers and gods appear in the sky. In this case, the splendid coral-colored veins are also used to glorify the emergence of the gods like a halo.

The alabaster plate is semi-transparent and the pigments painted on one side reflect on the other side of the plate. To minimize this problem, the painter arranged the motifs skillfully so that the painted field corresponds to the inverse of either side. As a result, all four scenes are harmonious with each other in the composition. So, *Aeolus* and *Phaethon*, *Andromeda* and *The Triumph* can be appreciated as a pair, while the combination can also be changed.¹⁸ According to the inventory, compiled in 1619 after the death of Emperor Matthäus, the younger brother and successor to Rudolf II, these dual-sided paintings seem to have been put in ebony frames and set on the ebony stand:

On an ebony base a large, elongated square panel of Agate, framed in ebony, painted on both sides, as on one Phaeton, on the other side Bacchus, Venus and other gods and goddesses, no. 1599.

A large, square panel of agate, on one side

Perseus and Andromeda, [on the other] a shipwreck of Aeneas, no. 1735.¹⁹

Thanks to this invention, the viewer could appreciate each side of them as a pair however he wished. In addition, the viewer could also take them off of the stand, hold them up against the light, and enjoy the effect of the light through the semi-transparent alabaster support.²⁰ The effect of the light would dramatize the stormy sea, the fall of the sun chariot or the emergence of the gods in the sky.

The pairs are compatible in respect to their composition. However, from the viewpoint of illustrating stories, I suppose that Hans von Aachen gave priority to the combinations of *Aeolus* – *The Triumph*, and *Andromeda* – *Phaethon*. Combining the pairs in this way, and with looking at *Aeolus Releasing the Wind* first, the violence of the wind and the air can be seen. Human beings are completely powerless in the face of nature, and the only hope is the help of Venus. Receiving the prayer of her son, Aeneas, the goddess will attempt to save him and his compatriots through the power of love. On the other side of the painting, there is *Andromeda and Perseus*. Also on this side, the disaster of nature is depicted, but this time is embodied by the Sea Monster. According to Ovid's *Metamorphose* (IV, 663–772), the Ethiopian princess Andromeda is going to be sacrificed to the Sea Monster, atoning for the arrogance of her mother, Cassiopeia. The princess is rescued by Perseus, who fell in love with her at first sight. Just identical to the inverse, the only hope, Perseus riding on Pegasus, hovers in the upper right corner.

In the opposite painting to this, *The Fall of Phaethon*, the hubris of Phaethon also causes the catastrophe (Ovid, *Metamorphose*, I, 750–II, 400). He borrowed the sun chariot from his father Apollo, in arrogance, believing that he could control it. Soon after he started, the chariot ran away off of the track and burnt all of the sky and the ground. In contrast to the previous two scenes, the story ended in the hopeless death of the protagonist. When returning to

the other side of *Phaethon*, the cheerful triumphal march appears. Ceres holds the cornucopia and Bacchus holds the wine glass and pitcher, the bounty of the earth. As the proverb of “*Sine Cerere et Baccho Friget Venus*,” or in reverse “With Ceres and Bacchus, Venus becomes cheerful” says, the fertility of the earth excites the love between men and women, as the burning heart held by Venus and the imposing appearance of Cupid on the wagon indicate. When we return to *Aeolus*, Venus, the goddess of love appears again as Aeneas’ only hope. Thus, appreciating the four history paintings with unrelated themes together in this order, it becomes apparent that they are carefully linked by the commonality of the undertones – the violence of nature, the power of love, hubris – and the antithesis – hope and ruin, violence and mercy.²¹

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, returning to the stone itself, the brilliance, colors, and texture of precious and semiprecious stones have been highly esteemed since ancient times. In his *Natural History* (XXXVII, 1–6), Pliny wrote the nature’s grandeur is gathered in the gemstone, and mentioned an agate possessed by king Pyrrhus as one of the most renowned gemstones in the world. On this agate, Apollo and the nine Muses with

their appropriate attributes could be seen. These images were “due not to any artistic intention, but to nature unaided.”²² In this agate, the veins and grains formed the images of gods in a marvelous way. Another marvelous stone, on which an image emerged through the wonder of nature, is preserved in the treasury in Vienna (fig. 20). It is believed that in this agate bowl, under certain lightning conditions, the letters of “*XRISTO*” appear.²³ This mysterious bowl was certainly known at the court of Rudolf II, because it belonged to “the inalienable heirlooms of the House of Austria”.²⁴ Anselm Boetius de Boodt, the imperial mineralogist and physician, reported about this agate bowl and its marvelous image in detail.²⁵

Thus, the images which the veins of the stones created by themselves were thought to be the quintessence of natural wonder. Hans von Aachen was surely conscious of this fact and tried to recreate the miracle through his own invention and brush, and emulated nature. The above mentioned inventory from 1619 registered mistakenly that the two dual-sided pictures discussed here are painted on agate, which would be quite intriguing. Seeing the glorious images painted by Hans von Aachen, the compiler of the inventory might have associated them with the agate bowl with the miraculous inscription, which was part of the Hapsburg family treasure, or with the marvelous

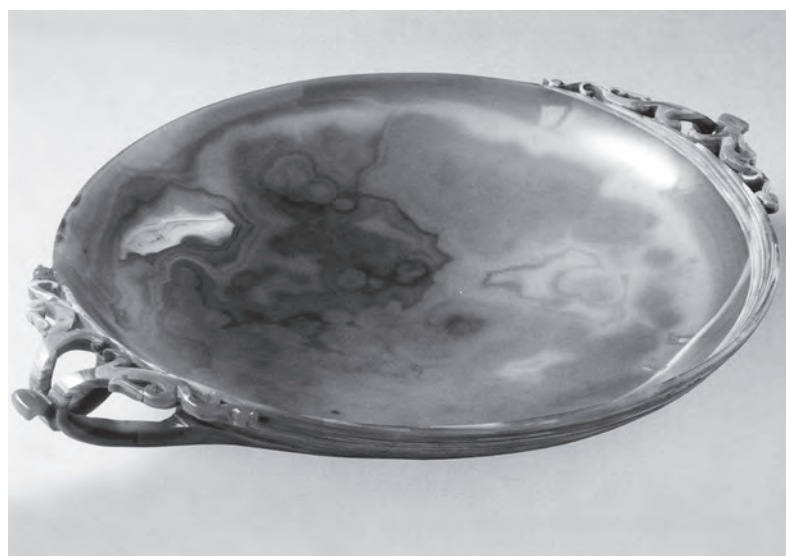


Fig. 20 Constantinople? *The Agate Bowl*, 4th century, agate, 58.5 cm, with handles, 76 cm, Imperial Secular Treasury, Vienna.

agate that was reported by Pliny.

Notes

- 1 As to the oil painting on copperplate in general, cf. Phoenix/Kansas City/The Hague 1989–1999.
- 2 As to Spranger's involvement in the copperplate oil painting, cf. Hirakawa 2011.
- 3 Alberti wrote, in Book II of *On Painting*; "The first thing that gives pleasure in a *historia* is a plentiful variety.... When the spectators dwell on observing all the details, then the painter's richness will acquire favour." Alberti/Grayson 1972, pp. 78–79.
- 4 Graham Smith appropriately pointed out the close relationship between Bronzino's *Allegory of Happiness* and Borghini's program. Cf. Smith 1984.
- 5 As to further discussion on Bronzino's *Allegory of Happiness* from this viewpoint, cf. Hirakawa 2010.
- 6 "OREMVS, DEVS QVI NOBIS IN SANCTA SINDONE, QVA CORPVS TVVM SACRATISSIMVM E CRVCE DEPOSITVN A IOSEPH IN VOLVTVM FVIT, PASSIONIS TVAE VESTIGIA RELIQVISTI, CONCEDE PROPITIVS, VT PER MORTEM ET SEPVLTVRAM TVAM AD RESVRRECTIONIS GLORIAM PERDV CAMVR QVI VIVIS, ETC". (Let us pray, God, who has left us the vestiges of Your passion in the Holy Shroud, in which Your holy body, deposited from the cross, had been wrapped by Joseph, forgive us so that we would be led through Your death and entombment to the glory of Resurrection, oh, who lives, etc.)
- 7 As to this self-portrait of Dürer, cf. Koerner 1993, pp. 95–96; Hirakawa 2009(a), pp. 76–79; Vasari 1550/1568/1878–1885, vol.4, pp. 353–354 (the life of Raphael); vol. 5, p. 551 (the life of Giulio Romano).
- 8 As to the oil painting on stone in general, cf. Seifertová 2007.
- 9 As to Sebastiano's experiment about the oil painting on stone in the artistic milieu of Rome, cf. Hirakawa 2009(b).
- 10 Hirst 1981, p. 125; Seifertová 2007, pp. 16–48.
- 11 As to the life of Alessandro Turchi, cf. Scaglietti Kelescian 1999.
- 12 "Non resterò di mettere in questi precetti una nuova inventione di speculatione, la quale, benché paia piccola, e quasi degna di riso, nondimeno è di grand' utilità à destar l'ingegno à varie inventioni, e questo è: Se riguarderai in alcuni muri imbrattati, o pietre di varii mischi, potrai quivi vedere l'inventione e similitudine di diversi paesi, diverse battaglie, atti pronti di figure, strane arie di volti, & habiti, e infinite altre cose; perché nelle cose confuse l'ingegno si desta à nuove inventioni." (I will not omit to introduce among these precepts a new kind of speculative invention, which though apparently trifling, and almost laughable, is nevertheless of great utility in assisting the genius to fine variety for composition. By looking attentively at old and smeared walls, or stones and veined marble of various colors, you may fancy that you see in them several compositions, landscapes, battles, figures in quick motion, strange countenances, and dresses, with an infinity of other objects. By these confused lines the inventive genius is excited to new exertions.) Leonardo 1651, p. 4, chap. 16; English translation is quoted from Leonardo/Rigaud 1910, p. 63, chap. 163. Its manuscript copies had already be circulating from the sixteenth century, though the first printed edition of Leonardo's *Treatise on Painting* was published in 1651. For example, one of manuscript copies from the late sixteenth century, now in the Riccardiana Library in Florence, certainly included this chapter (MS Ricc 1185, fol. 108). Plentiful manuscript copies and printed editions of Leonardo's *Treatise on Painting* can be examined on the following web site: *Leonardo da Vinci and His Treatise on Painting*, © 2012 Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia; Author Francesca Fiorani (<http://www.treatiseonpainting.org/home.html> Access: 02/20/2013).
- 13 As to the successful paintings of *Perseus and Andromeda* by D'Arpino, cf. Röttgen 2002, pp. 48–54, 258–259, 266, 286–287, 333–336, figs. 26–30, cat. nos. 47, 57–58, 98–102.
- 14 As to *The Four Elements* by Hans von Aachen, cf. Jacoby 2000, pp. 141–145, cat. nos. 41–41; Seifertová 2007, pp. 127–138; Aachen/Prague/Vienna 2010–2011, pp. 196–199, cat. nos. 65–66. Caracci's *Madonna and Child with the Adoring St. Francis* (fig.12) is also the one side of a dual-sided picture. The scene of the Annunciation is depicted on the inverse.
- 15 The above-mentioned slate version of D'Arpino's *Perseus and Andromeda* (fig. 11) was possessed by Rudolf II at that time. The work is identified to the following register in the so-called Viennese Inventory H compiled after the 28th of June 1619, after the death of Rudolf's young brother and successor Matthäus on the 20th March of this year: "14. Ein taffel auf stein mit Amtromeda von Joseph Arpinas. 1604" (No. 14. A panel on stone with Andromeda by Giuseppe d'Arpino). Cf. Röttgen 2002, pp. 333; Köhler 1907, p. IX. Therefore, Hans von Aachen may have had an opportunity to see D'Arpino's *Perseus and Andromeda* on slate (not the one on lapis lazuli, fig. 10), when he composed his work.
- 16 Cf. Jacoby 2000, p. 142.
- 17 As to the preparatory drawing, cf. Aachen/Prague/Vienna 2010–2011, pp. 200–201, cat. no. 67.
- 18 Among figures depicted in the four paintings, the solid, stiff modeling in *Aeolus Releasing the Wind* is striking. This awkwardness is improved on *Andromeda*, while the compositions become more elaborate on *Phaeton* and *The Triumph*. On this stylistic ground, I suppose that the painter first made *Aeolus*, and then created the other three. This might be the reason why the inventory of Rudolf's *Kunstammer* registered only the painting alleged to be *Aeolus*: "949. Auff wassergrawen marmorstain, darauf H.V.A. ein tempest und ungewitter mit plitz und schiffbruch gemalt" (No. 949. On water-gray marble, on which Hans von Aachen painted a tempest and storm with lightning and shipwreck). Bauer/Haupt 1976, p. 139, no. 2800. The compilation of this inventory began in 1607. The above-mentioned landscapes by Tempesta (fig. 13) were also registered in this inventory as nos. 955 and 956, and were included, together with stone-plate oil paintings by Hans von Aachen and other painters, in the category of "Gemeld auf alabaster or: und andere stain gemallt" (Painting painted on oriental alabaster and othere stones). Bauer/Haupt 1976, p. 140, no. 2805.
- 19 "Auf ainem ebenen fuess ain ablang viereckhete gross taffel von agata, in eben eingefast, auf beiden seithen gemahlt, als auf ainer Phaeton, auf der andern seithen bacchus, Venus und andere götter und göttinnen, no. 1599; Ain grosse gefierte taffel von agata, auf ainer seiten Perseus und Andromeda, ain schiffbruch Aeneae, no. 1735." It is known that this inventory was compiled after the 5th of May 1619. Voltellini 1899, p. CXI, no. 3282, p. CXIII, no.

3433. English translation is quoted from Aachen/Prague/
Vienna 2010–2011, pp. 196–199.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Christof Metzger paid attention to Aristotelian theory and
proposed an intriguing interpretation: “According to
Aristotle, fire carries the properties warm and dry, earth dry
and cold, air humid and warm, and water cold and humid.
Thus fire and air complement each other, as do earth and
water,.... Moreover, for obvious reasons, fire and water and,
respectively, earth and air constitute fundamental opposites.
Being free standing and movable, the panels could form
pendants that would realize any of these pairings....”
Aachen/Prague/Vienna 2010–2011, p. 199.
- 22 Cf. Eichholz 1989, pp. 165–167, esp. 167; Fučíková 1988,
p. 188.
- 23 Cf. Haag 2013, pp. 182–183, cat. no. 64.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Cf. Seifertová 2007, p. 127.

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